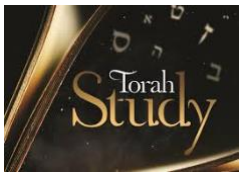
20170604 Numbers 4 "Aaronic Blessing"

"Aaronic Blessing"
Series: "Lessons for Living: A Christian Walk through the Torah"
by Faber McMullen, Pastor of Union Grove Baptist Church ©2017



Nasso (נשא) *"Take Up" No 34*
Numbers 4
9 Sivan 5777

Aaron's Benediction

22 Then the LORD spoke to Moses, saying,
23 "Speak to Aaron and to his sons, saying, 'Thus you shall bless the sons of Israel.
You shall say to them:
24 The LORD bless you, and keep you;
25 The LORD make His face shine on you,
And be gracious to you;
26 The LORD lift up His countenance on you,
And give you peace.'
27 "So they shall [a]invoke My name on the sons of Israel, and I *then* will bless them."

Looking at the Aaronic blessing from an Ancient Hebrew Perspective

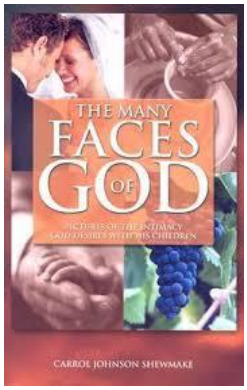
"Bless You" - (Root word "knee") Bend in Respect to You

The Hebrew verb ברך (Barakh, Strong's #1288) means to kneel as seen in Genesis 24:11. However, when written in the piel form, such as it is in Aaronic blessing, it means to show respect (usually translated as bless). "Respect" is an abstract word. Hebrew is a physical/concrete thought language. <u>This word has a root meaning "knee".</u> The image is to bring a gift to another while kneeling out of respect.
God respects us by providing for our needs, and we give ourselves to Him out of respect for who He is.

"Keep You" - (Root word "thorn") May He put a Hedge of Thorns around You

Remember the Jews were nomads who raised livestock. Shepherds were out in the wilderness tending their flocks. Sometimes they would make a corral of thorn bushes to guard the sheep. This was a hedge or a "hedge of protection" . The Hebrew word for thorn is שמיר (shamiyr, Strong's #8068) and derived from the verb שמר (shamar, Strong's #8104), which literally means to guard and protect and is the word used in the Aaronic blessing.

Face - His "fulness of being" "All of his faces/aspects"



Have you ever heard about "reading someone's face"? The face reflects the many different moods, emotions, and thoughts of a person. The Hebrew word פנים (paniym, Strong's #6440), means "face," but is always written in the plural form (the ים suffix identifies this word as plural), reflecting this idea of multiple faces of each person. This word can also mean "presence" or the "wholeness of being" of an individual.

Shine - (Root word "illuminate") "brings order out of the chaos"

The word אור (or, Strong's #215), as a noun means "light" and as a verb, as it is used here, means to "give light" or "shine" and is equated with bringing about order as light illuminates or reveals what has been dark. The blessing is saying, "May the Lord make His face to shine upon you....."may I am that I am with all of His faces/aspects illuminate your being, filling you with light that removes all darkness....may He replace all that is chaos in your being and fill it with order."

Gracious - (Root word "provide protection") He Gives you a Place to Camp

Most theologians will define "grace" as "unmerited favor," but notice the abstractness of these words. The Hebrew verb translated as gracious in the Aaronic blessing is the verb חנן (hhanan, Strong's #2603) and is often paralleled with other Hebrew words meaning healing, help, being lifted up, finding refuge, strength and rescue. From a concrete Hebraic perspective this verb means to "provide protection." Where does one run to for

protection? **The camp, which in Hebrew is חנה** (hanah, Strong's #2583), a word related to חנן (hhanan).

Grant - (Root word "set down in a fixed place")

The Hebrew verb שים (siym, Strong's #7760), literally means to "set down in a fixed and arranged place."

Peace - (Root word "to pay back restitution")

When we hear the word peace we usually associate this to mean an absence of war or strife. However, the Hebrew word שלום (shalom, Strong's #7965) has a very different meaning. The root of this word is שלם (shalam, Strong's #7999) and is usually used in the context of making restitution. When a person has caused another to become deficient in some way, such as a loss of livestock, it is the responsibility of the person who created the deficiency to restore what has been taken, lost or stolen. The verb shalam literally means to make whole or complete. The noun shalom has the more literal meaning of being in a state of wholeness, or being without deficiency. It is that feeling when all the dishes are done, all the children are fed, all the house is clean, all the to-do's are done, when all the oil is changed, when all the gas tanks are full, when all is perfectly in order. That is Shalom.

YHWH will kneel before you presenting gifts and will guard you with a hedge of protection.
YHWH will illuminate the wholeness of his being toward you bringing order and he will give you comfort and sustenance.
YHWH will lift up his wholeness of being and look upon you and he will set in place all you need to be whole and complete.[1]

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[1] http://www.ancient-hebrew.org/language_aaronic.html

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